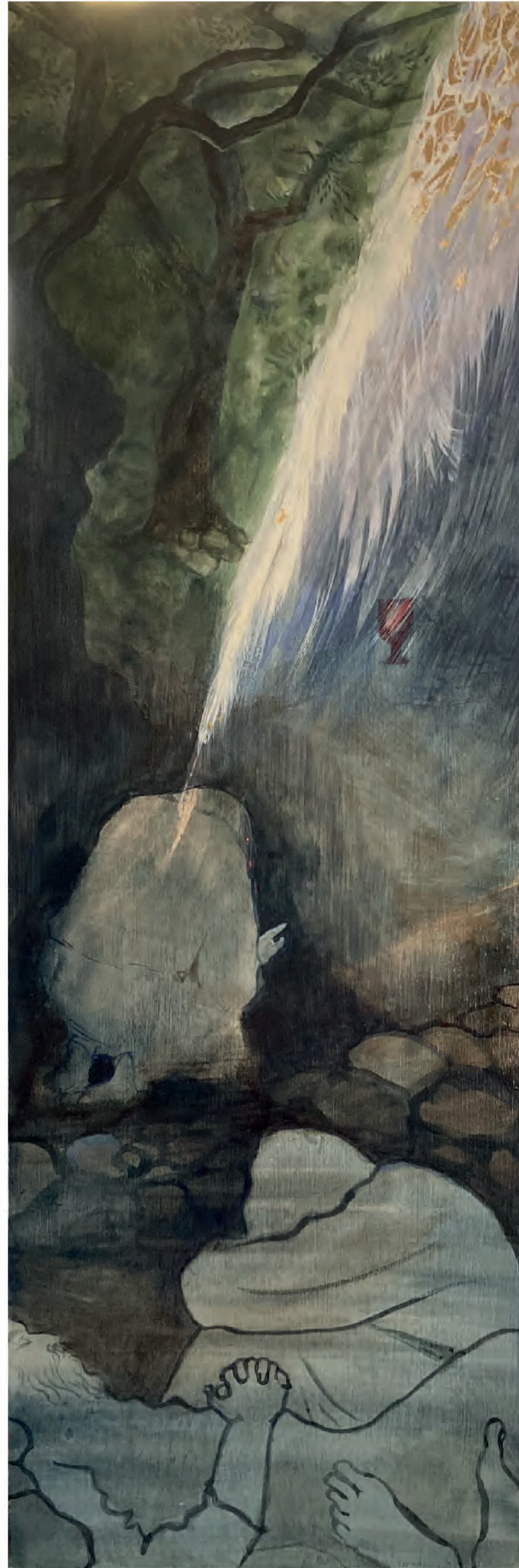


## *Stations of the Cross*

The Stations of the Cross are 14 paintings depicting the last 24 hours of Jesus' life.

We can look at these paintings and follow in his footsteps on the Via Dolorosa.





## 1 Gethsemane

The Mount of Olives is on a ridge east of Jerusalem. At the foot of the mount is a garden called Gethsemane, which derives its name from the Aramaic for oil press. An oil press turns the bitter and inedible olives into one of the most delicious oils. In the last week of his life this is the garden where Jesus goes to pray after teaching in the temple during the day.

This is his last night. Within 24 hours he will be laid in the grave.

*Luke 22:39-46* 'Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; but not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. When he rose from prayer and went back to his disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." '

## 14 Jesus is laid in the tomb

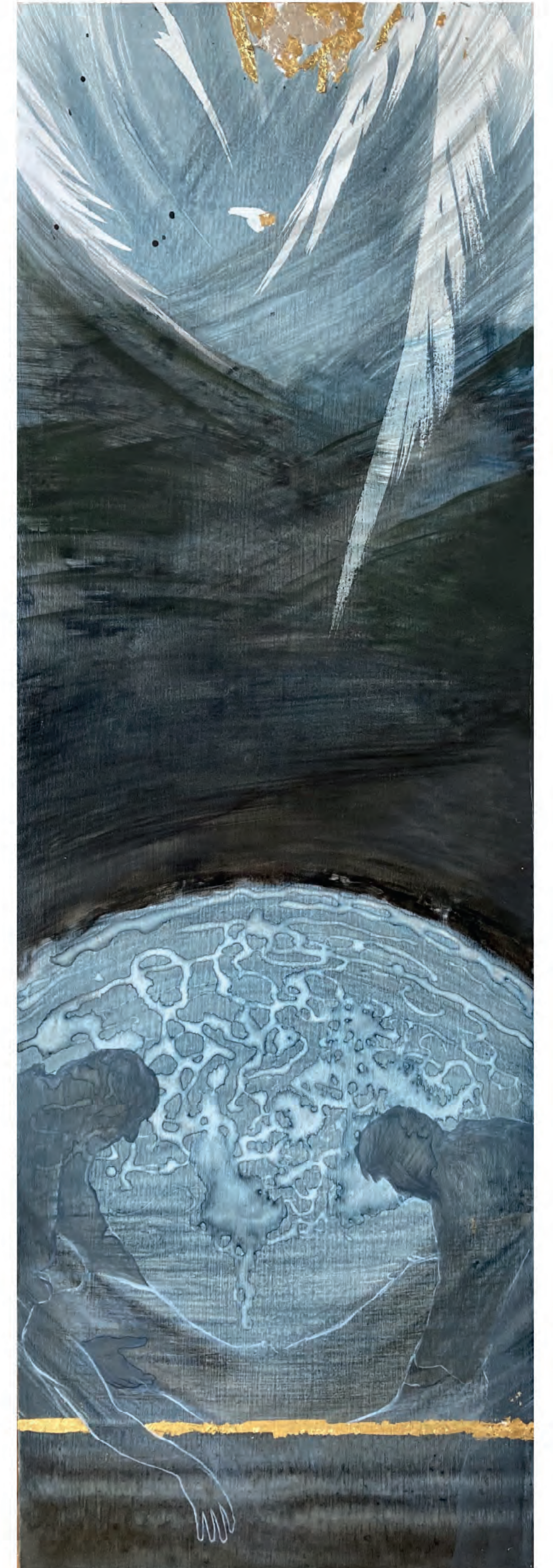
*Luke 23:50-54*

'Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to the decision and action of the Sanhedrin. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body.

Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no-one had yet been laid.'

Two figures lay Jesus' body down. The golden edge of the tomb suggests the coming victory over death. Above the body the separation of paint pigments in the arched background suggests that interlude when someone has died but their spirit is still present.

Angels wait to tell the women that Jesus has risen from the dead. The women will tell the disciples, and they will tell the world.







### 13 “And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain”

*Luke 23:44-46*

*‘It was now about the sixth hour and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.’*

*“In that day,” declares the Sovereign Lord, “I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.” Amos 8:9*

The curtain in the temple that concealed the holy of holies was embroidered with cherubim. As it tears from top to bottom it opens up the place where God dwells, the heavens with their real cherubim and angels. The curse for our sin in the garden of Eden has lifted. The cup of bitterness from the garden of Gethsemane has been drunk. The price to be in God’s presence again, has been paid. We are welcomed back to heaven.

### 2 Judas’ Kiss

*Luke 22:47,48 ‘While he was still speaking to his disciples, a crowd armed with swords and clubs came up. They were sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”’*

Judas has arrived with an angry crowd carrying weapons. When looking at Jesus the religious leaders of the Jews saw blood, Judas saw money. Some coins almost fall out of his pocket. He was paid thirty silver coins by the priests for handing over Jesus.







### 3 Jesus and Caiaphas

*Matth 26:57 'Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders assembled.'*

Jesus stands before Caiaphas who is backed by the scrolls and ledgers which contain the full weight of Jewish law. They hang like a wave over Caiaphas, who holds his hand firmly on a pile of closed books. Some of the scrolls that almost fall off the shelf point at Jesus. Some opening scrolls in the foreground seem to become part of Jesus's garment. The coins in the lower right corner are arranged in the shape of a lamb lying down, reminding us of the prophecy by *Isaiah (53:7) 'he was led like a lamb to the slaughter'*. Jesus remains a closed book for the priests and elders.

The light of dawn is not yet visible, and the cockerel is still asleep.

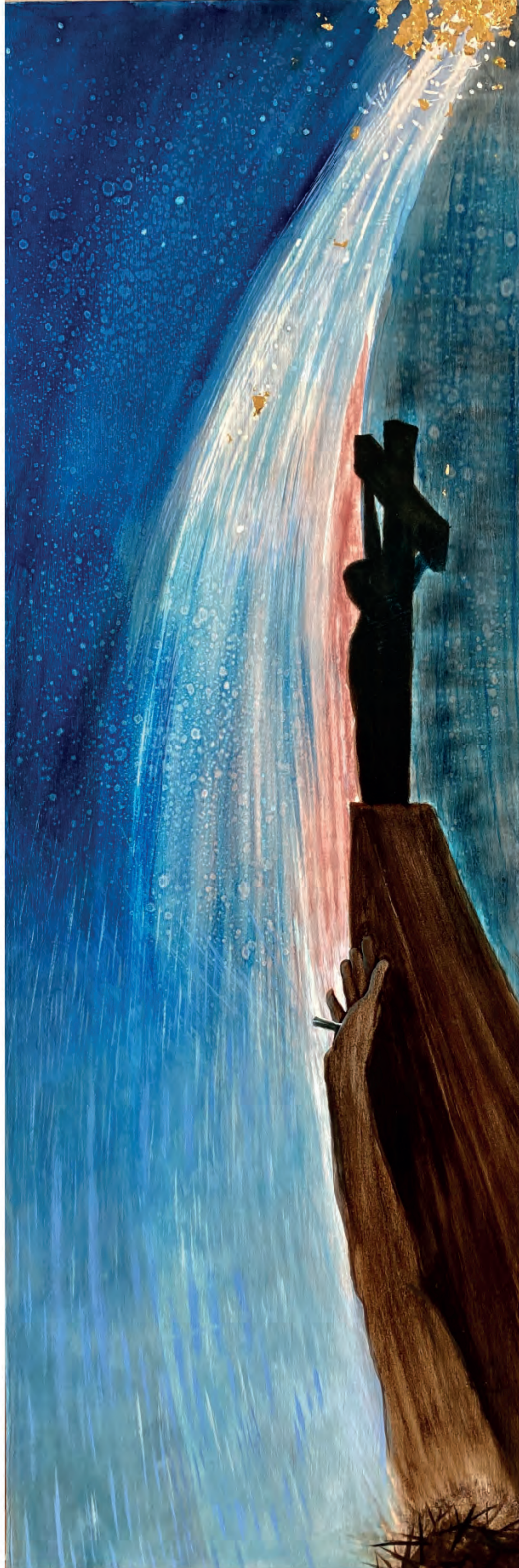
### 12 Jesus speaks to Mary and John

*John 19:25-27*

*Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing near by, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son, and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on the disciple took her into his home.*







## 11 'Hands that flung stars into space'

Luke 23:43

*'One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.'*

*Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."*

The gift of life in the heavens and the gift of the stars in the skies is in the hands of Jesus.

The gift of eternal life comes from *'...he who made the Pleiades and Orion, who turns blackness into dawn and darkens day into night'* (Amos 5: 8).'

## 4 Peter's denials

Luke 22:54b-61 *'Peter followed the soldiers at a distance. But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him." But he denied it.'*

Again someone recognises Peter and again he denies it. Then for a third time someone recognises him as one of Jesus's companions. Peter uses strong language to deny it.

*'Just as he was speaking, the cock crowed. Jesus, being led away to Pontius Pilate's house, turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord spoke to him: "Before the cock crows today, you will disown me three times."'*







## 5 Jesus is judged by Pilate

*Luke 23:13-25*

*'Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death. "Therefore I will punish him and then release him." With one voice they cried out, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!" Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. But they kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" '*

*Matt. 27:24*

*'When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but instead an uproar was starting he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!" '*

## 10 The crucifixion

*Luke 23: 33*

*'When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and two criminals. Jesus said "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.'*

Here eternity collides with the casual roll of the dice. The dark weight of Jesus' task on the cross looms over the lightly drawn figures of the indifferent soldiers gambling for his "seamless undergarment".

This, according to *John 19: 24*, "happened so that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, 'They divided my garments amongst them and cast lots for my clothing'." (*Psalm 22:18*)







## 9 Jesus addresses the women of Jerusalem

*Luke 23:28-31*

*“Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, ‘Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’*

*Then they will say to the mountains, fall on us! And to the hills cover us! For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”*

We see the backs of the women and Jesus’ hand as he makes this unexpected prophecy about the troubled times that will befall Jerusalem and about the end times when the godless world will suffer from injustice and disaster. A future where the world and God’s creation will be so spoilt that we cannot even find God’s comfort in nature.

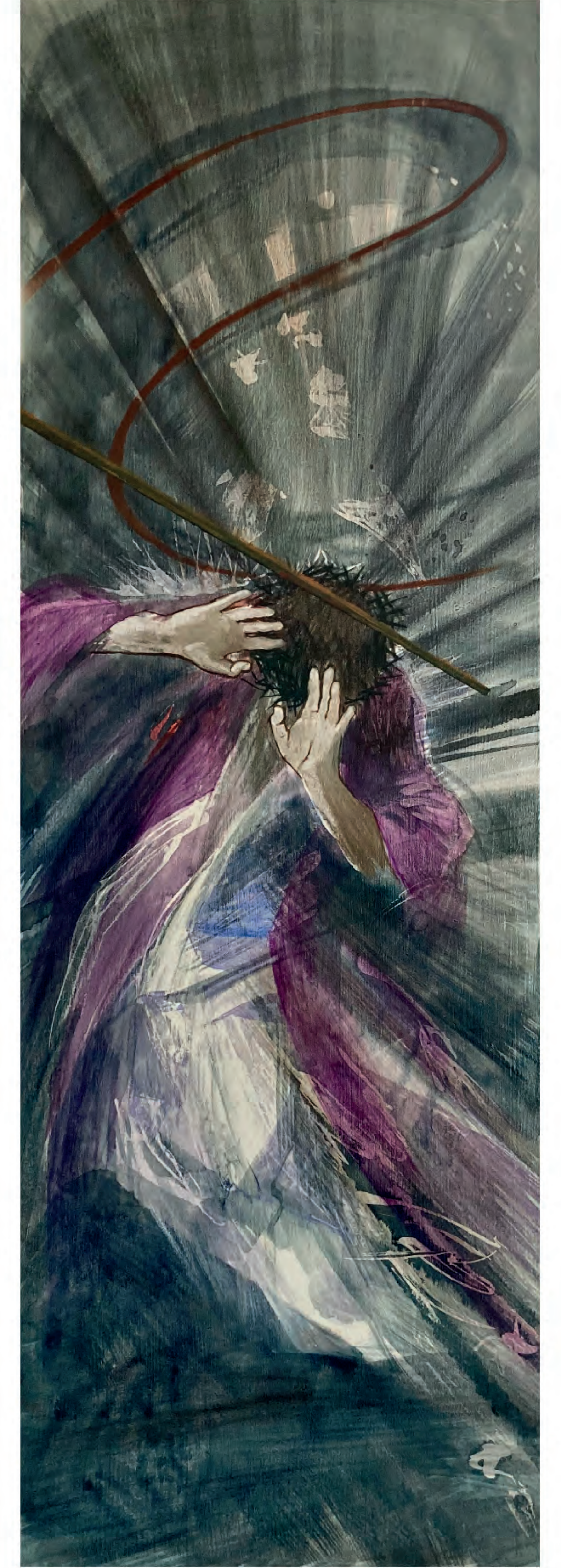
*Revelation 6:16,17 They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”*

This lamb is here on his way to be slaughtered.

## 6 The soldiers mock and beat Jesus

*Matt 27:27-31*

*‘The governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him. “Hail, king of the Jews”, they said. They spat on him and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.’*





## 7 Jesus takes up his cross

Jesus takes up his cross and with it the sin of the whole world.

The dark area above the cross here symbolises the weight of sin. Gold leaf – the most precious material available – is often used in art to surround the face of a saint, angel or God. It creates a space separate from its surroundings, thus setting the subject apart. Filling the space around the whole figure of Jesus is saying that he is uniquely qualified to take up this task.



## 8 Simon of Cyrene

*Luke 23:26*

*'As they led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.'*

Jesus was weakened after a gruelling night, the violent insults of the Sanhedrin and by the flogging. Simon cannot take on the weight of the sin of the world, but he can carry the actual wooden cross.





## *Stations of the Cross*

These paintings were commissioned by  
Dan Henderson the vicar of  
St Andrews church Hove.

The 14 panels were painted by Annelies Clarke.  
Each panel is 20cm x 60cm,  
in watercolour, intermediate varnish and  
oil on panel, with gold and silver leaf.